DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 250 035 JC 840 568

AUTHOR Jacobson, Karen H.; Horner, Annette M.
TITLE Notes to Teachers of Basic Writing: An Instructor's Guidebook.
INSTITUTION Reading Area Community Coll., Pa.
PUB DATE 30 Sep 83
NOTE 42p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Colleges; *Remedial Instruction; Skill Development; Two Year Colleges; Two Year College Students; *Writing Instruction; *Writing Processes; *Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

Drawing from classroom experience and current composition theory and research, this guidebook presents basic assumptions about teaching developmental writing and explores elements of the composing process. Five basic assumptions about developmental writing are discussed: (1) because writing is a skill, courses should be how-to or process-oriented; (2) instructors' advice and expectations should be based on realistic models of the composing process and on composing strategies that are known to be effective; (3) due to time limitations, instructional efforts should be concentrated on those writing skills, strategies, and structures that will be most critical to students' success in college; (4) most students are linguistically and cognitively competent and capable of learning to write given appropriate learning conditions; and (5) because academic writing is both private and public, small group work and discussion groups are particularly well suited to the needs of developmental writing students. Guidance on teaching the composing process is provided, suggesting that composing is made up of several parallel, recursive and interactive stages; i.e., exploring the topic to be written about; planning the order, direction, structure, and content of the written work; drafting and revising the work; and editing the material. A bibliography and course syllabus conclude the guidebook. (LAL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
G. Wilkins

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED250035

NOTES TO TEACHERS OF BASIC WRITING:

AN INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDEBOOK

Conducted

by

Karen H. Jacobson, Assistant Professor

and

Annette M. Horner, Instructor

Humanities Division

Submitted for

Use of the College Community

on

September 30, 1983

Staff assistance and financial support for this project was provided through a Strengthening Program Grant (Title III of The Higher Education Act of 1965).

Reading Area Community College
P. O. Box 1706
Reading, Pennsylvania 19607
215-372-4721

JC 840 568

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	ii
BASIC ASSUMPTIONS	
Assumption 1	1
Assumption 2	3
Assumption 3	4
Assumption 4	6
Assumption 5	8
TEACHING THE COMPOSING PROCESS	
Exploring	13
Planning	14
Drafting - Revising	15
Editing	17
EPILOGUE	19
BIBLIOGRAPHY	20
APPENDIX A: HU 101 DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES WRITING SYLLABUS	29
APPENDIX B: SELECTED READINGS	37

INTRODUCTION

The idea for these Notes emerged during a revision of the Developmental Writing course (HU 101) on which we collaborated in 1983. As we explored, discussed, and planned changes, we realized we were basing our decisions on assumptions and information we would have to share if other Developmental Writing teachers were to understand and accept the new course structure. These notes, drawn from our experience in the classroom and our knowledge of current composition theory and research, are our attempt to share some of those assumptions and that information with you.

By no means do we think we have conceived a perfect course or that we have all the answers to the many questions Developmental Writing teachers ask. Rather, we have made judgments, decisions, and revisions that we expect others will question, try, analyze, and revise again. The loose-leaf pages of these Notes symbolize for us not only the experimental nature of our revisions but also our hope that others who teach Developmental Writing will share their concerns and ideas, contributing additional pages to this guidebook or modifying existing ones.

Annette Horner

Karen Jacobson

September, 1983

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

The new direction for the Developmental Writing course is based on a variety of assumptions about writing and about learning and teaching writing. Because the course structure, assignments, and many of the daily activities are inextricably tied to these assumptions, we want first to identify and explore the most important ones as we see them. We will frequently refer or direct your attention to articles we have included at the end of the Notes or have listed in the bibliography. These articles not only reflect our understanding of writing and teaching writing but also communicate that understanding far more completely and eloquently than we are able.

****

Assumption 1: Because writing is a skill and not simply a body of knowledge, any course that purports to teach it should be primarily a "how-to" one (or "process-oriented" if one wants to use the jargon of composition specialists).

What does this premise imply in terms of the focus of the proposed course and that of the previous one? Traditionally, writing teachers, often recruited from the ranks of literature specialists, have taught composition as if it were a content course, devoting much class time to the presentation and discussion of models of good and bad writing. Donald Murray, a widely-published teacher and writer, emphasizes the folly of such a practice in "Writing as a Process: How Writing Finds its own Meaning" (in the selected readings at the end of Notes).

Murray declares, "The process of making meaning cannot be understood by looking backward from the finished page. Process cannot be inferred from product any more than a pig can be inferred from a sausage."

To view the issue from another perspective, if a tennis teacher (or piano, or reading, or typing teacher) were to spend all of his or her class time talking about good or bad tennis games, how well would the students be able to play at the end of the course? Probably not very well. A far better way to teach a skill, it seems to us, is to identify and explain effective strategies for performing that skill and then to have students practice those strategies extensively, providing frequent feedback and gradually shaping their performances. What we're proposing is a workshop-type format -- classes in which students actually write, working through the various stages of their papers under a teacher's supervision -- rather than a lecture format within which writing is simply discussed.

It is important to note that we are not discounting the use of prose models in teaching writing. On the contrary, we think that providing effective models and helping students to internalize their structures and forms are essential. (See Flanigan, "Composition Models: Dynamic and Static Imitations" and Rose, "Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and a Proposal"). We simply believe that if models are to be useful, they must be followed by and supplemented with extensive, guided practice in producing them.

****

Assumption 2: If we are going to teach our students the process of writing, we ought to base our advice and expectations on realistic models of the composing process and on composing strategies that are known to be effective.

This assumption seems commonsensical enough and not really worthy of our attention. Historically, however, most composition textbooks and many composition teachers have, in fact, based their advice to student-writers on unrealistic models and strategies. One commonly taught and eminently unusable model outlines three sequential stages in composing: pre-writing, writing, and revising. This model essentially advises students to decide what they want to say, to write it, and then to polish up what they've said. Many composition specialists would agree (and research would provide evidence) that sequential models of this sort truncate the composing process and/or are actually impossible to follow.

Research and experts aside, any proficient writer who critically examines his or her own composing processes will realize that s/he rarely proceeds lock-step in this fashion. S/he will probably also recognize that composing is often a process of discovery, involving a variety of interactive and recursive activities (e.g., exploring, planning, sequencing, writing/crafting, re-reading, revising, editing, etc.).

Knowing what we ourselves have discovered by analyzing our own writing processes and what recent research on the composing processes of both skilled and unskilled writers have revealed, we believe a significant portion of a developmental writing teacher's time should be devoted

to the following activities:

(a) providing students with a realistic, usable model of the composing process

(b) helping student-writers explore and understand their own composing processes

(c) identifying ineffective writing strategies

(d) suggesting alternate strategies and activities when the ones students use are counterproductive to good writing.

(We discuss the issue of composing models and processes -- as well as related teaching activities -- more extensively in the section of Notes entitled "Teaching the Composing Process.")

****

Assumption 3: Because we have limited time in which to help our students become proficient writers, we should concentrate our instructional efforts on those writing skills, strategies, and structures that will be most critical to their success in college.

If we accept this premise (which some writing teachers do not), we must ask a number of related questions -- namely, what skills, strategies, and structures are most critical to success? Traditionally, our answers to these questions have been based on intuition, historical precedents, and unquestioned assumptions. For example, developmental writing teachers and texts have assumed that the following practices (among others) enhance

or improve the writing ability of developmental students: extensive grammar instruction; teacher-centered discussion of good and bad prose models; extensive evaluation and annotation of students' final texts; and the structuring of paragraph-length assignments on simple, personal topics.

Recent research and speculation on writing and writing instruction have challenged these and similar traditional practices and assumptions. Two cogent and provocative articles which capture the essence of the research results and the speculations are Elizabeth Haynes' "Using Research to Teach English" (English Journal, 1978) and Mike Rose's "Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and a Proposal." In her essay, Haynes reviews many noteworthy experiments related to writing instruction and, drawing a number of conclusions from her review, identifies those practices that are likely to be effective in a writing class and those that are not.

In his article, Mike Rose speculates that the following traditional practices have a negative effect on students' writing: the separation of reading, writing, and thinking in terms of both course structure and assignment design; the writing teacher's "vigilance for error"; and the isolation of developmental writing courses and students from the "intellectual contexts" within which they are taught. Rose also establishes a convincing theoretical framework within which to understand his proposed changes in course structure.

Rather than summarize Rose's ideas, we are recommending that you read his article in its entirety, not only because a summary would fail

to capture the cogency and the appeal of his reasoning but also because two of his proposals -- providing developmental students with a broader, more realistic sense of the composing process and teaching them the skills, structures, and strategies of academic discourse -- form the basis for many of the changes we have made in our course structure.

****

Assumption 4: The majority of our students are linguistically and cognitively competent individuals who are capable of learning to write, given the appropriate learning conditions.

The ranks of developmental writing students have always been filled with speakers of nonstandard English, varieties of English that at one time were considered inferior to Standard English and still are considered inappropriate in most academic and professional contexts.

For this reason, many writing teachers have believed their primary instructional task to be the elimination of the offending dialect or at least student mastery of Standard English. Others, though they realize writing embodies far more than grammar and syntax, have erroneously believed they must "begin at the beginning," helping students master basic structures and skills before going on to more complex writing activities. Thus, they have started their developmental students and classes at the most basic level -- that of words and sentences -- working slowly and deliberately to groups of sentences, then to paragraphs, and finally (and rarely because little time was left) to brief essays.

Now, however, most composition specialists are beginning to accept linguists' contention that dialectal differences play an insignificant

part in overall writing ability and that the majority of students -- unless they are brain-damaged -- are linguistically competent. The pedagogical implication of this assumption is that grammar is not an appropriate starting point in most language learning situations. John Mellon, internationally famous linguist, declares:

> No child is deficient in grammatical structures compared with any other. Thus, the pedagogy for all children, not merely the intellectually and culturally favored, is a pedagogy leading students into increasingly mature uses of the linguistic system they already possess, a pedagogy showing them strategies for using the structures of their underlying competence in ever more mature patterns and conformations." (Mellon, "Language Competence," p. 29).

Mellon concludes -- as we have -- that students who write poorly should not be laboring over punctuation or grammar exercises but instead should be writing extended pieces of discourse "by the ream, every day, with a competent reader at their elbow, helping, teaching, urging, and guiding them" (p. 59).

Just as writing teachers were becoming comfortable teaching composing (writing as writing), some composition specialists declared that writing is a cognitive process. Others, concluding that students deficient in writing skills must therefore be cognitively undeveloped, began teaching general problem-solving skills within their writing classes.

We personally do not believe our students are cognitively deficient (i.e., unable to think abstractly, to elaborate, etc.) or that problem-solving skills isolated from the context of writing situations should be taught in the developmental writing classroom. We do believe that academic discourse -- and the thinking related to it -- is a specialized

way of communicating that must be experienced, practiced, and valued in order to be learned. In other words, writing classes should be devoted to teaching writing and to enhancing the value of writing within the social context of students' lives (See Assumption 5).

****

Assumption 5: Because the nature of academic writing is both private and public, we believe that a teaching method allowing frequent use of small group work and discussion groups is particularly well-suited to the needs of developmental writing students.

While our earlier assumptions discuss in some depth the nature of the composing process, they do not speak to the difficulties students in a classroom confront in learning to write proficiently. They do not speak to the resistances, the inhibitions, the fears, and the sense of novelty many students bring to the task of learning to write. Given the well-documented difficulties of the developmental student, a course concern with teaching students to write well must (1) convince these students that academic writing does require them to explore, shape, and clarify meaning for themselves and for their readers; and (2) it must support these students throughout the private and public (or social) stages of the process.

The writing student brings, then, to the class two interrelated sets of needs: pedagogical needs and psychological needs. Both sets are of concern to the writing teacher and have implications for classroom format and teaching methods. While current research has focused on peer grouping to meet pedagogical needs, we believe writing teachers can also

use and direct peer groups within their classrooms to provide psychological support for students and to "drive" their learning.

First, let us share with you the generally acknowledged pedagogical uses of peer groups. In the field of composition, the most commonly discussed uses of groups stem from the seminal writing of Peter Elbow (Writing without Teachers), Ken Macrorie (Uptaught, Writing to be Read), and Kenneth Bruffee, ("Collaborative Learning: Some Practical Models"). These authors propose peer grouping near the end of the composing process, to teach students a sense of audience and to relieve the teacher of some editing responsibilities. They suggest activities related to revising and editing (formative evaluation) -- the public face of the composing process. Mary Beaven in her "Individualized Goal Setting, Self-Evaluation, and Peer Evaluation" (on reserve) synthesizes ideas and strategies from these writers and presents some workable suggestions for the use of peer groups in the writing class. In addition to the uses which she suggests, we encourage the use of small groups at all stages of the composing process, particularly during the early exploring stages. Within a small group of peers, students can rehearse and give shape to their ideas and begin the process of clarifying meaning. Because the teacher is absent from such groups, discussion is likely to be more dynamic, more fluid, more frank, modeling verbal fluency for these students unpracticed in this skill.

While the pedagogical benefits of peer grouping are significant, there is strong evidence in the field of group dynamics and some germs of discussion in the field of composition that argue forcefully for the use of small work groups as a powerful source of psychological support

for the emerging writer. While we can discuss these benefits, we must say that this is a largely unexplored area only hinted at in professional literature. Mary Beaven, in the article mentioned earlier, points to the need in a writing classroom for a "climate of trust for writing" and to the assumption that "risk-taking, trying new behaviors as one writes, and stretching one's use of language and toying with it are important for growth in writing." (p.137). She does not, however, suggest that these behaviors be encouraged within the context of peer work groups. We, on the other hand, do. We also believe the groups provide the tools with which the "high-risk", unconfident writer may work though resistance she feels to writing in general or to a particular assignment.

Over the past fifty years a number of social scientists have explored the relationship between personal change (learning) and motivation. From Erich Fromm and Kurt Lewin, to David McClellan, Erik Erikson, Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow, these writers have traced a recognizable pattern of the emerging individual -- a pattern that frequently suggests our own students. These writers have taught us that personal growth, in spite of its benefits, is an inherently painful process throughout which people need support. In our students' case, the pain is associated with learning to write, and we believe that the necessary support can come in significant measure from a student's peers within the classroom context. Teacher Kenneth Bruffee cogently develops this point in his essay "Collaborative Learning: Some Practical Models" (on reserve).

Social science research cannot be ignored as we face groups of twenty and twenty-five students who must make significant leaps of

awareness and who need personal as well as pedagogical support during the process. Good teachers try to provide this support but often fail because the job is far too great for one person and because the teaching role frequently conflicts with the helping role. Peer work groups offer a way out of this dilemma by encouraging student access to one another for psychological support and by multiplying students' resources for learning. We therefore advocate the use of peer grouping as a psychologically sound and instructionally effective vehicle for teaching basic writing. Like Richard Gebhardt in "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing" we see our inexperienced, unconfident students struggling with "the artistic problem . . . of isolation." We accept his notions about broadening the student writer's sense of audience, of giving students practice in critical reading of papers, and of letting students learn from the editing suggestions of their peers. He suggests further:

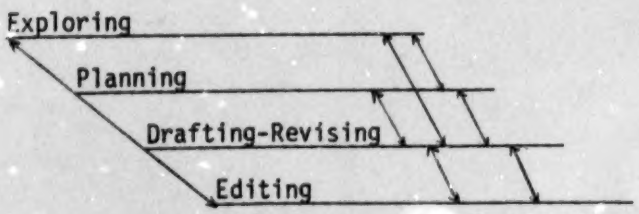
> "...considering the fear and frustration that often accompany writing, it seems a shame to limit collaboration to the end of the writing process -- to leave writers on their own while they generate material, crystalize a thesis, develop a sense of audience and voice, and organize a draft, and only then give them the benefit of other minds."

We agree.

TEACHING THE COMPOSING PROCESS

Over the last decade writing specialists have researched and theorized extensively about the composing process of both skilled and unskilled writers. We have included several articles and authors of significance in the selected readings and have listed many others in the bibliography. As you read the articles, it is important to remember that while research in composing is in its infancy and the conclusions of the researchers are clearly not definitive, they provide us with more realistic information to guide our work with students than we have previously had.

Specialists from a variety of writing-related fields (linguistics, cognitive psychology, rhetoric) have also proposed models which characterize the writing process as they see it. We have deliberately chosen a simple model from those available, believing not only that our task with developmental students is to teach them the basics rather than the finer points of writing but also that a more complex model might very well intimidate and inhibit them. The one we have selected (and which we will present to our students) is diagrammed below, followed by several paragraphs explaining it more fully. It is important to note that we believe this model too limiting for more advanced levels of composition.



This model, adapted from one designed by Dr. Allan Glatthorn of the University of Pennsylvania, suggests that composing is comprised of several parallel "stages" which are recursive and interactive. One composition specialist explained parallel-stage models as follows:

> (Several parallel stages)...are seen to operate concurrently, consulting each others' workings and results at any time. Each stage is assigned a processing dominance which does not shut down the others, but rather leaves them running with reduced resources. There might well be a preferred order in which the stages would normally be given the dominance, an order roughly comparable to the sequential-stage approach; but departures from that order would be commonplace, any other stage could be shifted to any other, or two or more stages might be running evenly at the same time (DeBeaugrande, 1981, p.5).

EXPLORING is the writer's initial and ongoing attempts to establish some sense of what s/he is going to write about. When exploring, a proficient writer might engage in any number of mental activities: considering subjects, thinking of an angle, reviewing his or her memory, identifying needed information, thinking about audience, etc. To facilitate the exploring process, a skilled writer will frequently jot notes, ask questions, and gather information from other sources.

The nature and extent of a writer's exploring activities will depend on a variety of factors: the writer's knowledge of the topic, the topic itself, the writer's awareness of his or her audience, the purpose for writing, the time available to complete the task, any writing plans or models the author already has stored in memory, and so on.

Composition teachers can help their student-writers explore more extensively and effectively than the research tells us they do by explaining and prescribing a variety of exploring strategies. Useful

activities include freewriting, perception exercises, brainstorming, journal writing, and heuristics. For further explanation and discussion of each of these activities, we highly recommend Erika Lindemann's chapter on "Pre-Writing Techniques" in A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers, a copy of which is on reserve in the college's library.

Although PLANNING may begin during exploration, it usually does not receive processing dominance until the writer has established some sense of what to write and how to go about it. And as with exploration, the content, nature, and extent of the planning will vary from writer to writer and from task to task. This stage is often characterized, however, by specific decisions for accomplishing the previously established goals. During this stage, the writer may reach decisions about the points s/he wishes to include, the order in which major topics will be discussed, the overall direction or structure of the written text, the way the text will begin, and so on.

While some writers can record these decisions mentally, especially if the text will be short, many prefer to tape them or write them down because of the number of decisions that need to be made and the increasing complexity of the composing process as they are made. Many writers will record their plans with jottings or sketchy outlines of major elements to be included in the text; a few will design more formal, more elaborate outlines. Because a writer can rarely plan his or her text in its entirety before translating it into written language, however, s/he will return frequently to the planning stage while composing, often to develop subsections of the text more fully. For an

intriguing exploration of writers' planning processes, we recommend you read "The Cognition of Discovery: Defining a Rhetorical Problem" and "The Pregnant Pause: An Inquiry into the Nature of Planning" (on reserve) by Linda Flower and John Hayes.

Most up-to-date composition textbooks (those on a freshman composition level not on a developmental level) provide sections or suggestions for teaching planning. One textbook that suggests especially useful planning strategies is Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing (chapters 5 and 7) by Linda Flower. In particular, Flower's "issue tree" technique has been adopted by a number of composition teachers. Two other books which provide helpful tips and techniques for teaching planning are Erika Lindemann's text (Chapter 11 "Shaping Discourse") and William Irmscher's Teaching Expository Writing (Chapter 9 "Teaching Structure"). Both books are on reserve in the college's library.

DRAFTING-REVISING is a complex process in which the writer attempts to translate his or her own ideas and plans into written language. Many writers, of course, translate their thoughts into written language when they are exploring and planning. What distinguishes the writing of this stage is that it is crafted for readers rather than for the writer. To make the text reader-based, the writer needs to perform numerous operations. Among other things, s/he must provide a framework within which the reader can understand the information, organize the information and sentences into a cohesive, coherent whole, frame exacting sentences, and provide adequate elaboration. These operations are rarely automatic or easy, even for skilled writers; they are especially difficult for unskilled

writers. We would recommend Linda Flower's "Writer Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing" for an exploration of the problems a writer faces when crafting and translating ideas into written language for a reader other than him or herself.

The drafting process is further complicated by the fact that it frequently involves more than translating prior thoughts and ideas into written language. In "Understanding Composing" Sondra Perl explains:

> It is important to note that what is there implicitly, without words, is not equivalent to what finally emerges. ...Once we have worked at shaping through language what is there inchoately, we can look at what we have written to see if it adequately captures what we intended. Often at this moment discovery occurs. We see something new in our writing that comes as a surprise. We see in our words a further structuring of the sense we began with and we recognize in those words we have discovered something new about ourselves and our topic (College Composition and Communication, 1980, p. 367-8).

Drafting, then, can be a process of discovery as well as of translating. For an enlightening discussion of the discovery aspects of composing, we recommend you read Donald Murray's "Writing as Process: How Writing Finds its Own Meaning."

As with exploring and planning, drafting-revising can be a highly individual process which varies from person to person and task to task. Some writers will draft for sustained periods of time, not stopping until their ideas have been exhausted. Only then do they return to their text and, reading with a critical eye, begin to restructure, reshape, and rewrite. Some skilled writers will work thus through a series of drafts, refining their texts in stages. Other writers will draft their written text in sections -- sometimes long, sometimes brief, returning after each section (perhaps a block of paragraphs, single

paragraphs, a series of sentences, or even parts of sentences) to re-read, evaluate, and modify.

Whenever possible, a writing teacher should be sensitive to the drafting-revising styles of individual students -- if the advice s/he gives them about composing is to be productive. Highly recursive writers (e.g., those who return after every few words to make corrections, additions, etc.) would probably be unreceptive if not hostile, to a teacher's suggestions for extensive revisions once they had finished a "first draft." For student-writers such as these, a teacher should probably offer frequent, extensive advice for revisions in the early stages of composing, as well as encourage them to experiment with free writing and brainstorming -- techniques that suspend the hypercritical judgments that often inhibit the composing of unskilled writers.

On the other hand, student-writers who write without stopping to re-read, reconsider, or revise should be encouraged, once they are past the exploring stage, to do just that -- to evaluate their direction and decisions from time to time, to monitor the effectiveness of the many judgments a writer makes while composing.

The drafting-revising stage is an appropriate point to focus on sentence combining/generating skills (and as a result, punctuation skills), transitional devices, coherence, and so on --the knowledge, skills, forms, etc. that make writing "reader-based."

EDITING is the final stage in which proficient writers proofread and polish, making minor changes in word choice, punctuation, sentence

style -- changes that probably do not significantly affect the meaning and quality of the writing but which bring the text closer to the writer's expectations. For unskilled writers, however, whose usage, grammar, and vocabulary skills are inconsistent or even grossly deficient by our standards, the editing stage can be a critical and meaningful point at which to learn and apply these skills.

Helping students become aware of their individual composing styles, identifying their unproductive writing strategies and activities, and offering them alternative models for composing is no easy task, especially in a class of twenty-five students with divergent abilities. It is our intention, however -- with a blend of small group activities, individual conferences, large group discussions, and ample time for students to write -- to guide our students through the composing process for each of the major assignments outlined in the syllabus. We want our students to experience that process, from the frequently anxious beginning to the often satisfying end, as many times as possible under our supervision. Our hope, of course, is that by the end of the term they will have acquired (but not yet internalized) sufficient knowledge and skill to monitor their own writing processes and products independently.

EPILOGUE

**We realize these Notes fall far short of what they should be and, in fact, of what we intended them to be. Unfortunately, time ran out for us. These are the other sections which we had intended to write and hope someday will be completed: Developmental Writers -- Who They are and What Their Writing is Like; Screening Basic Writers for Physical and Learning Problems that can Interfere with the Development of Writing Skills; Instructional Activities -- Appropriate Uses for Large Group Discussion, Small Group Activities, and Teacher-Student Conferences; and Evaluating Writing.

We invite you to write, modify, or contribute to these and other sections of Notes. We also encourage you to share informally your observations and concerns about teaching Developmental Writing with others who teach the course. Your knowledge and perspective can contribute significantly to our collective understanding of how best to teach our students.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Annette Horner

Karen Jacobson

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Professional Source Books: Theory and Practice

Cooper, C. and Odell, L. Evaluating Writing. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977.

* Cooper, C. R. The Nature and Measurement of Competency in English. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1981.

Cooper, C. R. and Odell, L. (Eds.) Research on Composing: Points of Departure. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978.

Emig, J. The Composing Processes of Twelfth-Graders. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1971.

Gebhardt, R. D. Composition and Its Teaching. Findlay, OH: Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, 1979.

Glatthorn, A. Classnotes on the Composing Process. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1983.

Graves, R. L. Rhetoric and Composition: A Sourcebook. Rochelle Park, NJ: Hayden Book Company, 1976.

Hirsch, E. D. The Philosophy of Composition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

* Irmscher, W. Teaching Expository Writing. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

* Lindemann, E. A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Murray, D. A Writer Teaches Writing. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1968.

* Neman, B. Teaching Students to Write. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1980.

Nystrand, M. (Ed.) What Writers Know: The Language, Process, and Structure of Written Discourse. New York: Academic Press, 1982.

* Shaughnessy, M. Errors and Expectations. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Tate, G. and Corbett, E. (Eds.) The Writing Teachers Source-book. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Composing: Theory, Research, and Practice

Bridwell, L. "Revising Strategies in Twelfth Grade Students' Transactional Writing." Research in the Teaching of English, 1980, 14, 197-222.

Britton, J. "The Composing Processes and the Functions of Writing." Research on Composing: Points of Departure (Cooper and Odell, Eds.). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978.

Cooper, C. and Matsuhashi, A. "A Theory of the Writing Process." The Psychology of Writing (Martlew, E., ed.). New York: John Wiley, 1982.

* Crowley, S. "Components of the Composing Process." College Composition and Communication. ???, 166-169.

* Flanigan, M. "Composition Models: Dynamic and static Imitations." Theory into Practice. 19(3), 211-219.

Flower, L. and Hayes, J. "The Cognition of Discovery: Defining a Rhetorical Problem." College Composition and Communication, 1980, 21-32.

Flower, L. and Hayes, J. "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing. College Composition and Communication, 1980, 365-387.

Flower, L. and Hayes, J. "The Pregnant Pause: An Inquiry Into the Nature of Planning." Research in the Teaching of English, 1981, 15, 229-243.

Flower, L. and Hayes, J. "Uncovering Cognitive Processes in Writing: An Introduction to Protocol Analysis." To appear in Research on Writing: Principles and Methods, (Rosenthal, Tamor, and Walmsley, eds.). New York: Longman, in preparation.

Flower, L. "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing." College English, 1979, 41, 19-37.

* Gebhardt, R. "Initial Plans and Spontaneous Composition: Toward a Comprehensive Theory of the Writing Process." College English, 1982, 44, 620-627.

Harris, M. "Modeling: A Process Method of Teaching." College English, 1983, 45, 74-84.

* Haynes, E. "Using Research in Preparing to Teach Writing." English Journal, January 1978, 82-88.

* Murray, D. "Writing as Process: How Writing Finds Its Own Meaning." Eight Approaches to Teaching Composition. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1980.

* Perl, S. "Understanding Composing." College Composition and Communication, 1980, 31, 313-369.

* Perl, S. "The Composing Processes of Unskilled College Writers." Research in the Teaching of English, 1979, 13, 317-336.

Petrosky, A. and Brozeck, J. "A Model on Teaching Based Upon Current Knowledge of the Composing Process." English Journal, 1979, 68, 96-101.

* Pianko, S. "A Description of the Composing Processes of College Freshman Writers." Research in the Teaching of English, 1979, 13, 5-22.

* Rose, M. "Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and a Proposal." College English, 1983, 45, 109-128.

Stallard, C. "An Analysis of the Writing Behavior of Good Student Writers.: Research in the Teaching of English, 1974, 8, 206-18.

Evaluation of Writing: Teacher, Peer, and Self

* Bartholome, D. "The Study of Error." College Composition and Communication, May 1981, 253-269.

* Beavens, M. H. "Individualized Goal Setting, Self-Evaluation, and Peer Evaluation." Evaluating Writing, Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977.

* Brannon, L. and Knoblauch, C. H. "On Students' Right to Their Own Texts: A Model of Teacher Response." College Composition and Communication, 1982, 33, 157-167.

Broadhead, Berlin, and Broadhead. "Sentence Structure in Academic Prose and Its Implications for College Writing Teachers." Research in the Teaching of English.

* Elbow, P. "Embracing Contraries in the Teaching Process." College English, 1983, 45, 327-339.

Ellman, N. "Peer Evaluation and Peer Grading," English Journal, March 1975, 79-80.

Faigley, L. "Names in Search of a Concept: Maturity, Fluency, Complexity, and Growth in Written Syntax." College Composition and Communication, October 1980, 291-299.

Freedman, A. and Pringle, I. "Writing in the College Years: Some Indices of Growth." College Composition and Communication, 311-323.

Griffin, C. W. "Theory of Responding to Student Writing: The State of the Art." College Composition and Communication, 1982, 33, 296-301.

Hake, R. and Williams, J. "Style and Its Consequences: Do As I Do, Not As I Say." College English, 1981, 43, 433-451.

Hairston, M. "Not All Errors are Created Equal: Nonacademic Readers in the Professions Respond to Lapses in Usage." College English, 1981, 43, 794-807.

* Harris, M. "Evaluation: The Process for Revision." Journal of Basic Writing. Spring/Summer 1978, 82-87.

Hillocks, G. "The Interaction of Instruction, Teacher Comment, and Revision in Teaching the Composing Process." Research in the Teaching of English, 1982, 16, 261-277.

Lloyd-Jones, R. "Primary Trait Scoring." Evaluating Writing. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977.

Lynch, D. "Easing the Process: A Strategy for Evaluating Compositions." College Composition and Communication, 1982 33, 310-314.

* Mellon, J. "Language Competence." Nature and Measurement of Competency in English. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977.

Miller, S. "How Writers Evaluate Their Own Writing." College Composition and Communication, 1982, 33, 140-147.

Platt, M. "Correcting Papers in Public and Private." College English, 1975, 37, 22-27.

Rubin, D. "Evaluating Freshman Writers: What Do Students Really Learn?" College English, 1983, 45, 373-379.

Siegel, M. "Responses to Student Writing from New Composition Faculty." College Composition and Communication, 1982 33, 302-309.

* Sommers, N. "Responding to Student Writing." College Composition and Communication, 1982, 33, 148-156.

Williams, J. "On Defining Complexity." College English. 1979, 40, 595-609.

Witte, S. and Faigley, L. "Cohesion, Coherence, and Writing Quality." College Composition and Communication, May 1981, 189-204.

Peer Grouping/Collaborative Writing

Bruffee, K. "Collaborative Learning: Some Practical Models." College English, February, 1973.

Bruffee, K. "The Way Out: Innovations in College Teaching." College English, January 1972, 457-470.

Ellman, N. "Peer Evaluation and Peer Grading," English Journal, March 1975, 79-80.

Gebhardt, R. "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing." College English, 1980, 42, 69-74.

James, D. "Peer Teaching in the Writing Classroom." English Journal, November 1981, 48-50.

Lynch, D. "Easing the Process: A Strategy for Evaluating Composition." College Composition and Communication. 1982, 33, 310-314.

Maimon, E. "Talking to Strangers." College Composition and Communication, December 1979, 30, 364-369.

Platt, M. "Correcting Papers in Public and Private." College English, 37, 22-27.

Thelan, H. "Group Interactional Factors in Learning." from Behavioral Science Frontier in Education.

Thelan, H. "Some Classroom Activities for People-Oriented Teachers." The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 1965, 1, 270-285.

***Note about bibliographic items:

This is only a partial listing of the many relevant and thoughtful articles and books on writing and the teaching of writing. More are being published every month, making it a Herculean task to stay current with the literature. To make the task easier, we will place new articles on reserve from time to time, notifying you each time by inter-office memo or by posting the new article(s) on the bulletin board in Room 502.

We have been able to put only a small number of the books and articles on reserve in RACC's Library (indicated by an asterisk in the left-hand margin). The majority of the other books and articles, however, can be found either in Albright's Gingrich Library or in the Kutztown University Library.

APPENDIX A

HU 101
DSP Writing Syllabus

HU 101
DSP WRITING

Reading Area Community College
10 South Second Street
Reading, Pennsylvania 19603

Fall, 1983

I. Basic Course Information

A. Title: Developmental Writing
B. Number: HU 101
C. Semester Hours Credit: Three
D. Prerequisites: Placement by Writing Sample and a minimum of a 7.0 Reading level

II. Instructional Activities

A. Paired and small-group activities
B. Individual conferences with instructor
C. Large group activities
D. Private writing sessions
E. Tutoring sessions in the Writing Lab (Room ____) --assigned on an individual basis to students needing additional help

III. Course Description

This course helps develop basic writing skills essential for success in many college courses. The student will learn how to compose short, effective essays through extensive, guided practice with a variety of composing activities, strategies, and tasks.

IV. Rationale of the Course

The writing required in many college courses (often referred to as academic discourse) is a specialized way of communicating ideas. It is a form of written language that requires extensive knowledge and practice. This course is designed to teach the basics of academic discourse, both the process and the product, to students who have not been trained in it.

V. Knowledge Goals:

A. Knowledge Goals:

1. that composing is a complex process of shaping and discovering meaning.

2. that composing involves a variety of activities that are interactive and recursive: exploring, planning, drafting-revising, and editing.

3. that the nature and extent of these composing activities vary from writer to writer and from task to task (e.g., in-class vs. out-of-class writing; personal vs. academic writing; specified vs. unspecified topics, etc.)

4. that there are specific strategies that facilitate and nurture these composing activities.

5. that there are critical differences between speaking and writing that affect the composing process and the final written product.

6. that the following are valuable sources of information for Academic Writing:

   a. External--the library, observations, and experts
   b. Internal--analysis of personal experience as it relates to phenomena outside one's self.

B. Skill Goals (The skills listed here are not learned in this order and are not meant to be taught sequentially)

1. To explore information, ideas, and experience to give writing initial focus, direction, and meaning

2. To match appropriate exploring strategies to a given writing problem

3. To develop a piece of writing around a central, controlling idea

4. To create a coherent structure within which to present ideas related to the controlling idea of the paper--a structure that includes an introduction, a body, and a conclusion

5. To write effective introductions, bodies, and conclusions for a variety of writing problems/situations

6. To arrange ideas logically within both individual paragraphs and an essay as a whole and to convey/signal that logic with appropriate wording and language

7. To write correct, coherent sentences that capture the essence and the complexity of the writer's/paper's ideas

8. To monitor his/her own composing processes and to judge the effectiveness of his/her final papers.

C. Attitude Goals

1. An acceptance that mastery of composing skills is necessary for success in college and in many life situations.

2. The belief that writing is a learned skill--one that can be developed by anyone willing to work hard and to write frequently.

3. An appreciation for the craftsmanship involved in good writing and a desire to become a skilled craftsperson in it.

4. An appreciation of the value of correctness and neatness in any piece of academic writing.

VI. Instructional Materials

A. Required

1. One-to-One: Resources for Conference-Centered Writing
2. A dictionary
3. 8½" X 11" lined paper
4. Spiral notebook
5. 4" X 6", lined note cards

B. Optional

1. Harbrace Handbook
2. A Thesaurus (preferably one in "dictionary form," i.e., alphabetical order)

C. Supplementary--the instructor will occasionally recommend and/or provide other books and materials to individual students

VII. Requirements for Passing the Course

A. Major Writing Assignments -- Students must complete the six core writing assignments to the satisfaction of their individual instructors. Students will be guided throughout the composing process for each of these long assignments by extensive advice/evaluation from classmates and teacher.

B. Daily Journal Writing -- Students will be expected to write at least four times weekly (for twenty minutes each time) in their journals. Subjects for the journal entries will be specified by the individual instructors. For the most part, however, the purpose of the journal is (a) to explore ideas and to work out parts of the longer papers and (b) to encourage fluency with written language. Although journal entries will not be evaluated by the teacher, they will frequently be shared with classmates.

C. Final Exam -- On two separate occasions, the student must write a short, in-class essay (350-500 words) with the following characteristics:

1. It conveys a controlling idea which guides the development and organization of the essay.

2. It exhibits a coherent structure--an introduction that conveys the direction and/or purpose of the essays; a body that fulfills the expectations of the reader, as established by the introduction; a conclusion that follows meaningfully from the rest of the essay.

3. The arrangement/sequence of ideas within both individual paragraphs and the essay as a whole is logical, and the wording of the essay signals/conveys that logical arrangement/sequence clearly to the reader.

4. It is comprised of correct, coherent sentences that capture the essence and/or complexity of the writer's/essay's ideas (to include appropriate word choice, correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.

**Note: The grading system(s) for the major papers, the journal, and the final exam--as well as their influence on final course grades--will be determined by individual instructors.

Note that the following information pertains only to my individual classes. Some of these rules may be exactly what another instructor requires, some of them may not be.

VIII. Attendance

A. All students are expected to attend all classes.

B. Students who arrive more than five minutes late or who leave early without permission will be regarded as absent.

C. After four (4) absences a student will be referred to a counselor and, if appropriate, to the financial aid or veteran's advisor. After six absences, the student will automatically receive an "R" grade (which is a failing grade; see p.___ of the college catalogue for more information).

IX. Other Important Information

A. _____ is the last day to add a course.

B. _____ is the last day to drop a course without a grade.

C. _____ is the last day to drop a course with a "W". After this date, a student receives a failing grade in any course he drops--no matter what grades he is receiving at the time.

COURSE OUTLINE/ASSIGNMENTS	TARGET DATES	RELATED READINGS	RELATED JOURNAL WRITING-READING	OTHER
Introduction: Becoming Familiar with Composing	- - - - - -	Chapter #1 - " " pp. 1-8 Chapter #2 "The Composing Process" pp. 9-29	- - - - - - - -	In-class observation of writers writing. Self-Analysis of Writing Behaviors. Selecting book for Assignment 3.
I. Exploring Causes and Speculating On Effects: a 350-500 word essay in which student explores possible causes or speculates on potential effects.	October 13/14	Chapter #13-"Cause and Effect" pp. 108-115	Chapter #25 - "Keeping a Journal" pp. 193-199 Chapter #26 - "Free Writing" pp.200-202	Reading and Note Taking for Book Review
II. Researching and Reporting: A 350-500 word report which answers some question related to student's academic concerns (e.g., financial aid, career planning, test taking, etc.)	October 27/28	Related handouts Chapter #11 - "Classification" pp. 89-99	Chapter #34 - "Continuing Work" pp. 236-245	Research by interview and/or reading Reading and Note Taking for Book Review
III. Reading and Analyzing a nonfiction book: a 500 word book review. **Reading and preliminary note taking for this assignment should be completed by October 28.	November 8/9	Handout--Book Review Guidelines Chapter #21 - "Book Review" pp. 170-176	Related to Major Writing Assignment	

COURSE OUTLINE/ASSIGNMENTS	TARGET DATES	RELATED READINGS	RELATED JOURNAL WRITING-READING	OTHER
IV. Comparing and contrasting as thinking and writing strategies: A project in which the student (1) chooses a subject and (2) explores, analyzes, and focuses that subject by comparing and contrasting (Two children=play styles of two children in the ELC; local retailers = credit policies of two local retailers.) The study should result in a 350-500 word essay that communicates significant conclusions of the study.	November 17/18	Chapter #8 -"Short Comparison and Contrast" pp. 63-69 Chapter #9 -"Extended Comparison and Contrast" pp. 72-80	Related to Major Writing Assignment	Interviews Observations, and/or Reading
V. Observing and Interpreting: A 350-500 word report related to a content course or a vocational interest. The report should record the writer's observations of an experience and give meaning to what was seen.	November 29/30	Chapter #20 -"The Outside Report" pp.165-168 Chapter #19 -"Informing and Advising"	Chapter #32 - "Social Issues" pp. 229-232	Observations and/or Reading
VI. Composing an Essay--Start to Finish: An open-ended assignment that requires the student to write a 350-500 word essay. The instructor will not structure either the form or the content of the essay.	December 6-7	Chapter #15 -"The Deductive Essay" pp. 122-138 Chapter #16 -"The Inductive Essay" pp. 140-145	Related to Major Assignment	

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges NOV 30 1984